

Chapter 12 – Implementation

A comprehensive plan is only as good as its level of implementation. The basic level of implementation happens when the Planning Commission reviews this Comprehensive Plan before making decisions to ensure that the decisions they make are consistent with the Plan.

A key function of the plan is to provide some predictability about the potential land use and timing of development so that the public and private sectors can make informed decisions in the area of real estate and capital investment.

The City's subdivision and zoning ordinances and regulations should be reviewed to identify those areas currently not implementing the goals, objectives, and policies outlined in the Plan. These goals, objectives, and policies should be reflected in the City's subdivision and zoning ordinances and the necessary changes made to these ordinances to reflect the changes in the Comprehensive Plan. Also review the subdivision and zoning ordinances and modify, replace, update, or remove any regulations contradicting the Plan's goals, objectives, and policies.

A comprehensive plan is intended to be a living document that changes as circumstances within a community change. To this end, it is helpful to annually review the Comprehensive Plan to determine if any major new issues have occurred in the past year which suggest the need for specific amendments to the Plan. Additionally, a full detailed update of the Plan should be completed every seven to ten years.

Regular Planning Commission meetings should be held to keep the City Commission informed of all proposed development as well any emerging issues or topics. Open lines of communication should be maintained with the City Commission, citizens, Hughes County, and state and local agencies so issues and ideas can flow freely between these groups.

The Comprehensive Plan's preceding chapters identified existing conditions, analyzed issues, and made recommendations about the future direction of the City of Pierre. The following organizes the

recommendations into an action plan which can help the City implement the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan has both specific actions which should be undertaken at specific points in time and general guidelines which need to be reviewed and followed as the City continues to grow and change.

Implementation is the responsibility of the City Commission, the Planning Commission, and City staff. However it cannot be effectively implemented without the cooperation of other local organizations and the citizens of Pierre.

The following sections identify changes to regulations, studies to be completed, and a development phasing strategy.

Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Ordinance

One of the primary tools available to cities to implement their comprehensive plans is their land use regulations. These typically consist of both zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations. Zoning ordinances generally address the uses of land and subdivision regulations generally address the division of land. Both are needed to guide the land development process.

In order to allow downtown redevelopment and revitalization to be accomplished the Plan recommends creating a new district or modifying the existing CBD district to provide more flexibility in land uses and to encourage the development of a mixed use district with a variety of residential options. The Plan also recommends that this new district cover most of the downtown area between Charles Street and Crow Street.

In order to help the City enhance its image the Plan recommends that landscaping requirements be implemented to ensure that the downtown area has pedestrian oriented streetscapes and open spaces and that the primary gateways to present an attractive welcoming first impression of the City.

In order to minimize land use conflicts and enhance public safety the Plan recommends establishing an airport safety overlay district which will control the intensity of uses for certain areas adjoining and beyond the ends of runways. This overlay district should be used in coordination with the underlying zoning district to control the types of development, the intensity of use, and the heights of structures within the overlay area.

In order to promote and enhance traffic safety and mobility the Plan recommends incorporating access spacing guidelines into the subdivision regulations. These guidelines should be used to ensure that during any intensification of land use, access locations are carefully managed to protect the long term mobility of corridors and to preemptively mitigate potential traffic safety issues.

In order to ensure that future arterial and collector roads can be properly located and linked to the existing street network, and to implement the future road network recommendations of the Plan, ROW dedication standards should be incorporated into the subdivision regulations.

In order to mitigate the impacts of present or future unwanted noise the subdivision and zoning regulations should incorporate requirements to evaluate building construction siting and apply noise standards to these evaluations.

In order to implement the future land use plan included in the Comprehensive Plan the City should rezone land into appropriate zoning districts at or before the time development applications are submitted to the City.

Studies

Some issues identified in the Comprehensive Plan process were beyond the scope of the project or did not warrant analysis at this time, but are expected to need analysis at a later date. The Plan recommended several future studies or analyses be completed.

State and Federal historic preservation organizations have designated three historic districts and approximately 32 individual properties. The City of Pierre should consider formalizing its policy to consult with state and local historic preservation on the demolition, moving or major rehabilitation of historic structures.

The City should consider completing an access management plan in partnership with the SD DOT and Hughes County for the State Highway 1804 corridor in Sections 16, 17, 20, 21, & 28. This plan would identify:

- opportunities for access consolidation
- specific locations for future collector and arterial roadway intersections with State Highway 1804
- specific actions to be taken when any future development is proposed which may involve access to State Highway 1804.

The City should prepare and maintain a local highway noise program. In coordination with this program, the City should develop a noise contour map for areas adjoining U.S Routes 14 and 83 and State Highways 1804 and 34.

The Safe Routes to School program recently established by SAFETEA-LU should be evaluated for opportunities to help fund local multi-use paths in developing areas and improve pedestrian access and safety in the residential areas of the city.

Based on anticipated housing market trends for the upcoming 15-20 yeas and current housing availability, it appears one of the underlying issues facing the City of Pierre relates to the potential need for more housing options. This includes more low-income and moderate income housing, more rental housing across the price spectrum, and more variety in the types or styles of housing available. The critical issue which needs action is to remove any impediments from existing zoning or subdivision regulations which might inhibit the ability for more housing diversity to be created. A study should be undertaken to identify and recommend specific changes to the City's zoning and subdivision regulations which will encourage housing diversity.

There are opportunities to create amenities which enhance the City in areas which are not likely to be developed at urban densities due to the physical characteristics of the land. These include portions of areas such as Whiskey Gulch and Hilgers Gulch. The Plan recommends development of portions of Hilgers Gulch for linear green spaces with nodes for activity centers. A study should be completed to identify and prioritize possible locations and types of facilities which could be incorporated into these areas of the City. The resulting plan should be

implemented as development occurs in the adjoining areas of the City or as the need to extend sewer services through these areas occurs.

At some time in the future it may be desirable to develop a new location for public school facilities. There may also come a time when it is desirable to add some large scale park facilities like ball fields to provide for additional demand. A partnership between parks and public schools has often been beneficial because they can share facilities which are used by the public year around. At such time as the need for an additional school or additional large scale park facilities becomes evident, the City should work with the school district to evaluate sites and the opportunity to partner in developing shared facilities.

Pierre has a strong park system with much of the park land near the Missouri River. It is important to maintain and take advantage of River park land. However, there are benefits to providing park land near new subdivisions especially when new subdivisions are far from the River. Research suggests that one of the most desirable amenities in a community is park and open space near residential land. The benchmark for proximity to park and open space land is a 5 minute walk (generally a quarter mile). When terrain and land use patterns make it practical, the City should encourage the developments to incorporate neighborhood scale parks or connections to the existing park/trail system.

One of the best attributes of Pierre is the character of the views available from many locations in and around the City. Indiscriminate development can permanently remove this asset from the community. In order to protect this asset it is recommended that the City undertake a study to prepare guidelines for siting future development in a way that retains certain key locations as scenic areas that are not developed. Examples include the rough terrain in Section 28 and 33.

The Blue Ribbon Panel on Parks made several recommendations which have been incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan recommendations. Some of these involve facilities decisions. The decisions and requisite analyses include:

- Identifying and selecting the site and facilities to replace the City Auditorium.
- Identifying and selecting the best option for the outdoor pool.

- Identifying and selecting the best option for a golf course clubhouse.

A number of the Comprehensive Plan recommendations pertain to utilities including Water, Waste Water, Storm Water, Electrical and Garbage Services and Facilities. Some of these recommendations advocate studies and decisions. These include:

- Analyze the needs for future wastewater treatment capacity
- Evaluate the potential to construct a gravity sewer line which would allow the elimination of either the Riverplace or Neltom lift stations
- Develop a capital improvements program which addresses all facility maintenance and facility expansion or replacements. The capital improvements program also provides a way to prioritize and repair manholes and sewer lines per recommendations of the 2005 Sanitary Sewer Facilities Plan.
- Prepare a capacity management operations and maintenance program plan to anticipate increased federal and state regulation of sanitary sewers
- Initiate five specific activities to support the ongoing sanitary sewer systems needs as an ongoing service plan
- Incorporate storm water retention into open space or utilize ponds as amenities
- Monitor cost recovery of residential solid waste program and raise rates to cover program costs
- Initiate a study to evaluate relocation of baling facility.

Development Phasing

The sequence of capital expenditures and land development has consequences to Pierre's taxpayers. In order to minimize these impacts, the following strategy for future development is recommended. If this development sequence is followed, it may have impacts on the timing and sequence of planned capital improvements such as the extension of sewer trunk lines.

1. Redevelopment and infill in the downtown area should be promoted and encouraged immediately.
2. Development in Sections 27 and 35 should be allowed to occur as market forces dictate.

3. Development in Sections 21 and 22 should be planned now, but held as urban reserve until Section 27 is developed to the point extension of City services will occur without leapfrog development.
4. Planned rural residential development in Section 20 should be allowed to occur as market forces dictate after appropriate guidelines and regulations are in place to ensure protection of natural resources.
5. Infill development at locations where the City already provides City services should be encouraged and promoted.

Areas designated for immediate development or near term development will generally be vacant areas within the city limits with some or most of the infrastructure required for development already in place or available contiguous to the area. In areas with this designation, the City actively encourages growth.

Areas designated for midterm development will be contiguous to existing or planned development, lack most infrastructure required to support development, but might reasonably be expected to develop within the planning period. The City will consider development proposals in these areas only if the developer agrees to provide all off-site improvements necessary to extend municipal services to the proposed development. The balance of the city growth areas will be designated for long-term development. In areas with this designation the City will encourage agricultural land uses to remain and will strongly discourage urban development until adequate services have been planned.

Annexation Program

If the orderly growth of Pierre is to continue over the planning period, it is essential that the City continue pursuing an active annexation program as municipal services are requested. The boundaries for providing municipal services should generally coincide with the corporate limits. Areas designated by the land use plan as future growth areas of the city should be annexed in advance of major development, as should existing rural subdivisions, which lie adjacent to the city. This policy will assure that sufficient development land to accommodate the future growth of the urban area is maintained.

A primary benefit of annexing key growth areas prior to actual development is that it permits the City to extend major streets and utilities on an efficient scale rather than a piecemeal basis. Engineering and capital improvements programming can be carried out for large areas rather than for individual subdivisions, allowing more timely and economical public improvements. The availability of these facilities will encourage development in planned service areas where the availability of major streets and utilities is assured. Advance annexation of future growth areas will ensure that new development is designed to meet city standards and is provided with municipal utilities and services.

The extension of water or sewer service to a development shall be predicated upon annexation of the property, which shall occur before the land is provided with municipal services. Voluntary annexation agreements may limit or outline the phasing, timing, or development of utility services and may include specific or general plans for the financing of infrastructure improvements and the land uses of the area.

Existing rural subdivisions, which lie within the city's service area, can be addressed by the annexation program as well. Timely annexation of these areas will prevent illogical jurisdictional boundaries and fragmented local government or private utility responsibilities. Furthermore, severe tax inequities within the urban area can be eliminated through annexation of subdivisions which enjoy a wide range of city facilities and services toward which they contribute no property tax support.

While annexation actions initiated by the city are often controversial and difficult, many problems can be avoided simply by adhering to an established annexation process. If key issues are resolved prior to annexation approval, much of the public misunderstanding and opposition can be prevented. The following annexation guidelines should be consistently applied in the future:

1. Annex undeveloped land within the city's planned growth area in advance of major development and as municipal service requests are received.
2. Delineate annexation areas which represent logical service areas for the extension of major streets and utilities.
3. Annex contiguous rural subdivisions when it becomes feasible to provide city utilities and services.

4. Identify and attempt to mitigate any potential adverse economic, social, or environmental impacts resulting from annexation actions.
5. Make preparations to insure an orderly transition of service responsibilities from the county and/or private utility systems to the city.
6. Complete the timely extension of major public services and facilities into annexed areas through coordination with the Capital Improvements Program.

Of utmost importance in the annexation process is the need to sensitively deal with the concerns of affected residences and property owners. By assuming political jurisdiction over an annexed area, the city also assumes a responsibility to protect the life-style and economic well-being of its residents. Particularly in established residential neighborhoods, consideration should be given to such things as zoning, and street and utility improvements which might adversely affect the character of the area.

From a broader perspective, coordination with the Capital Improvements Program is equally important. Annexation of planned growth areas must occur early enough to provide adequate lead-time for the construction of major street and utility improvements. This ensures an ample supply of developable land can be maintained and inflated land prices resulting from municipal service lags can be minimized.